

### **Amendments to the Claims:**

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1-20. (CANCELLED)

21. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) A personally portable vacuum desiccator for collecting and storing liquid comprising:

a desiccator cartridge having an interior chamber, a unidirectional inlet port to the interior chamber, an outlet port from the interior chamber, a perforated gas flow channel, and a trapping agent in the interior chamber, wherein perforations are formed laterally through the gas flow channel;

a vacuum pump in fluid communication with the outlet port;

a motor operably connected to said vacuum pump;

a planar, low profile battery connected to the motor; [[and]]

a tube having a first end in fluid communication with the unidirectional inlet

[[port.]] port; and

wherein the perforated gas flow channel is at least partially disposed in the interior chamber.

22. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The personally portable vacuum desiccator of claim 21 wherein said trapping agent is selected from the group consisting of desiccants, adsorbents, and absorbents.

23. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The personally portable vacuum desiccator of claim 21 wherein said tube comprises a single passage flow path.

24. (CANCELLED)

25. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The personally portable vacuum desiccator of claim 21 further comprising a control circuit in electrical communication with said motor for controlling the operation of said motor.

26. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The personally portable vacuum desiccator of claim 25 wherein said control circuit comprises at least one sensor selected from the group consisting of moisture sensors, pressure sensors, and pressure differential sensors.
27. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The personally portable vacuum desiccator of claim 25 wherein said control circuit comprises an I/O unit.
28. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The personally portable vacuum desiccator of claim 21 wherein said desiccator cartridge comprises a transparent material which allows observation of said trapping agent.
29. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) A personally portable vacuum desiccator for collecting and storing liquid exudate comprising:
- a chamber having a trapping agent and a perforated gas flow channel,  
wherein perforations are formed laterally through the gas flow channel;
  - a vacuum pump in fluid communication with said chamber;
  - a motor operably connected to said vacuum pump;
  - a planar, low profile battery connected to the motor; and
  - a tube having a first end in fluid communication with said chamber.
30. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The personally portable vacuum desiccator of claim 29, wherein said trapping agent is selected from the group consisting of desiccants, adsorbents, and absorbents.
31. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The personally portable vacuum desiccator of claim 29, wherein said tube comprises a single passage flow path.
32. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The personally portable vacuum desiccator of claim 29, wherein said trapping agent is disposed within a cartridge that is removable from said personally portable vacuum desiccator.

33. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The personally portable vacuum desiccator of claim 29 further comprising a control circuit in electrical communication with said motor for controlling the operation of said motor.

34. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The personally portable vacuum desiccator of claim 33, wherein said control circuit comprises at least one sensor selected from the group consisting of moisture sensors, pressure sensors, and pressure differential sensors.

35. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The personally portable vacuum desiccator of claim 33, wherein said control circuit comprises an I/O unit.

36. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The personally portable vacuum desiccator of claim 32, wherein said cartridge comprises a transparent material which allows observation of said trapping agent.

37. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) A vacuum desiccator for collecting and storing liquid exudate comprising:

- a chamber having a trapping agent, a unidirectional inlet port to the chamber, a perforated gas flow channel, and an outlet port from the chamber,  
wherein perforations are formed laterally through the gas flow channel;
- a vacuum pump in fluid communication with the outlet port;
- a motor operably connected to said vacuum pump;
- a low profile battery connected to the motor;
- a micro-filter located between the outlet port and the vacuum pump; and
- a tube having a first end in fluid communication with the unidirectional inlet port.

38. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The vacuum desiccator of claim 37, wherein said vacuum desiccator is transportable upon the body of a person.

39. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The vacuum desiccator of claim 37, wherein said vacuum pump is operable to draw liquid exudate from a wound or incision through said tube and into said chamber.

40. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The vacuum desiccator of claim 37, wherein said trapping agent includes a capacity for trapping a volume of liquid exudate.

41. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) A vacuum desiccator for collecting and storing liquid exudate comprising:

- a housing having a removable desiccator cartridge, a vacuum pump, and a motor operably connected to the vacuum pump;

- a chamber interior to the removable desiccator cartridge having a trapping agent and a perforated gas flow channel, wherein perforations are formed laterally through the gas flow channel;

- a unidirectional inlet port to the chamber;

- an outlet port from the chamber in fluid communication with the vacuum pump;

- and

- a tube having a first end in fluid communication with the unidirectional inlet port.

42.-44. (CANCELLED).

45. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) A vacuum desiccator comprising:
- a removable desiccator cartridge having an interior chamber, a unidirectional inlet port to the interior chamber, an outlet port from the interior chamber, a perforated gas flow channel, a low profile battery, and a trapping agent in the interior chamber, wherein perforations are formed laterally through the gas flow channel;
  - a vacuum pump in fluid communication with said interior chamber through the outlet port;
  - a motor operably connected to the low profile battery and said vacuum pump;
  - a low profile housing enclosing the removable desiccator cartridge, the vacuum pump, and the motor;
  - a micro-filter positioned between the outlet port and the vacuum pump; and
  - a tube having a first end in fluid communication with said interior chamber through the unidirectional inlet port.
46. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The vacuum desiccator of claim 45, wherein the tube transmits liquid exudate from a wound or incision to the interior chamber.
47. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The vacuum desiccator of claim 45, wherein a second end of the tube is in fluid communication with a wound or incision during healing of the wound or incision.
48. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The personally portable vacuum desiccator of claim 21, wherein the planar, low profile battery is housed in a battery compartment attached to the desiccator cartridge.
49. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The personally portable vacuum desiccator of claim 26, wherein the pressure sensors comprise ~~comprises~~ at least one of a surface strain gauge and an optical displacement gauge.
50. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The personally portable vacuum desiccator of claim 21, wherein the trapping agent includes at least one of an elastic mesh material, a knitted fabric mesh, and a gauze.